

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for authorizing access to a human resources database, comprising:
  - detecting, by a computer, a new query for a set of database records;
  - determining whether an identifier employee number associated with the set of database records matches an identifier employee number of a user that submitted the new query;
  - determining whether the user is authorized to acquire a new lock on the set of database records, wherein the user is authorized if the ~~identifier~~ employee number associated with the set of database records does not match the ~~identifier~~ employee number of the user;
  - denying the new lock if the user is not authorized; [[and]]
  - setting the new lock or making an attempt to set the new lock if the user is authorized; and
  - informing the user that the user can access the set of database records when the user is authorized or informing the user that the user cannot access the set of database records when the user is not authorized.
- 2 - 4. (Cancelled).
5. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 further comprising permitting access to the set of database records if the user is authorized.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 5 further comprising releasing the new lock after the user has checked out from the set of database records.
7. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein determining whether the user is authorized further includes determining whether the user has write authorization for the set of database records.
8. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein determining whether the user is authorized further includes determining whether the user has a maximum database access authorization.
9. (Cancelled).
10. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein determining whether the user is authorized includes determining whether the user is organizationally authorized.
11. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein determining whether the user is authorized includes determining whether the user is currently authorized.
12. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium storing program instructions for performing a method of authorizing access to a human resources database, the method comprising:

detecting a new query for a set of database records;

determining whether an identifier employee number associated with the set of database records matches an identifier employee number of a user that submitted the new query;

determining whether the user is authorized to acquire a new lock on the set of database, wherein the user is authorized if the identifier employee number associated with the set of database records does not match the identifier employee number of the user;

denying the new lock if the user is not authorized; [[and]]

setting the new lock or making an attempt to set the new lock if the user is authorized; and

informing the user that the user can access the set of database records when the user is authorized or informing the user that the user cannot access the set of database records when the user is not authorized.

13 - 15. (Cancelled).

16. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12 further comprising permitting access to the set of database records if the user is authorized.
17. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 16 further comprising releasing the new lock after the user has checked out from the set of database records.

18. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12 wherein determining whether the user is authorized includes determining whether the user has write authorization for the set of database records.
19. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12 wherein determining whether the user is authorized includes determining whether the user has a maximum database access authorization.
20. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12 wherein the user has a conflict of interest when the set of database records personally pertain to the user.
21. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12 wherein determining whether the user is authorized includes determining whether the user is organizationally authorized.
22. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12 wherein determining whether the user is authorized includes determining whether the user is currently authorized.
- 23 - 24. (Cancelled).
25. (Currently Amended) A database system authorizing access to a human resources database, comprising:  
a processor;

a memory storing instructions executable by the processor, the  
instructions comprising:

means for detecting, by a computer, a new query for a set of  
database records;

means for determining whether an ~~identifier~~ employee  
number associated with the set of database records  
matches an ~~identifier~~ employee number of a user that  
submitted the new query;

means for determining whether the user is authorized to  
acquire a new lock on the set of database records,  
wherein the user is authorized if the ~~identifier~~  
employee number associated with the set of database  
records does not match the ~~identifier~~ employee  
number of the user;

means for denying the new lock if the user is not authorized;  
[[and]]

means for setting the new lock or making an attempt to set  
the new lock if the user is authorized; and

means for informing the user that the user can access the  
set of database records when the user is authorized  
or informing the user that the user cannot access the  
set of database records when the user is not  
authorized.

26 - 28. (Cancelled).

29. (Previously Presented) The database system as recited in claim 25 further comprising means for permitting access to the set of database records if the user is authorized.

30 - 34. (Cancelled).

35. (Currently Amended) A method for making a preliminary determination of whether a user has authorization to access a set of database records, comprising:

detecting, by a computer, a new query from the user for a set of database records;

determining whether an ~~identifier~~ employee number associated with the set of database records matches an ~~identifier~~ employee number of the user that submitted the new query;

determining whether the user ~~has a chance of being~~ is authorized to acquire a new lock for the set of database records based on the ~~identifier~~ employee number of the user and at least one of (a) write authorization and (b) a lack of conflict of interest; ~~[[and]]~~

denying the new lock if the user ~~does not have a chance of being~~ is not authorized; and

informing the user that the user can access the set of database records when the user is authorized or informing the user that the user cannot access the set of database records when the user is not authorized.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 35, further comprising:  
setting the new lock or making an attempt to set the new lock if the user  
~~has a chance of being~~ is authorized.
37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 35, wherein determining whether  
the user ~~has any chance of being~~ is authorized to acquire the new lock further  
includes determining whether the user has a maximum database access  
authorization.
38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein determining whether  
the user has a conflict of interest includes determining whether the set of  
database records personally pertain to the user.
39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 35, further comprising:  
determining, when the ~~identifier~~ employee number associated with the set  
of database records matches the ~~identifier~~ employee number of the  
user, whether the set of database records comprise critical or  
non-critical information; and  
wherein the user ~~does not have a chance of being~~ is not authorized when  
the set of database records comprise critical information.
40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the critical  
information comprises pay records of the user.

41. (Currently Amended) A method for determining whether a user has authorization to access a set of database records, comprising:
- detecting, by a computer, a new query from the user for a set of database records;
  - determining whether an identifier employee number associated with the set of database records matches an identifier employee number of the user that submitted the new query;
  - determining whether the user is authorized to acquire a new lock for the set of database records based on the identifier employee number of the user and, when the identifier employee number associated with the set of database records matches the identifier of the user, whether the set of database records comprise critical or non-critical information; [[and]]
  - denying the new lock if the user ~~does not have a chance of being~~ is not authorized; and
  - informing the user that the user can access the set of database records when the user is authorized or informing the user that the user cannot access the set of database records when the user is not authorized.
42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41, wherein the user is not authorized when the set of database records comprise critical information.
43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the critical information comprises pay records of the user.

44. (Currently Amended) A method for authorizing access to a human resources database, comprising:

detecting, by a computer, a new query for a set of database records;

determining whether an ~~identifier~~ employee number associated with the set of database records matches an ~~identifier~~ employee number of a user that submitted the new query;

determining whether the user is authorized to acquire a new lock on the set of database records, the user being authorized if the user does not have a conflict of interest with respect to the set of database records, wherein the user does not have a conflict of interest when the ~~identifier~~ employee number associated with the set of database records does not match the ~~identifier~~ employee number associated with the user;

denying the new lock if the user is not authorized; [[and]]

setting the new lock or making an attempt to set the new lock if the user is authorized; and

informing the user that the user can access the set of database records when the user is authorized or informing the user that the user cannot access the set of database records when the user is not authorized.

45. (Currently Amended) A method for authorizing access to a human resources database, comprising:

detecting, by a computer, a new query for a set of database records;

determining whether a user that submitted the new query is authorized to acquire a new lock on the set of database records, wherein the user is authorized if the user does not have a conflict of interest

when the set of database records do not personally pertain to the user;

denying the new lock if the user is not authorized; [[and]]

setting the new lock or making an attempt to set the new lock if the user is authorized; and

informing the user that the user can access the set of database records when the user is authorized or informing the user that the user cannot access the set of database records when the user is not authorized.